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FIRST COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR SIERRA LEONE (1998-2002)

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INTRODUCTION

1. In line with national development priorities and the UNDP mandate and comparative advantage, the first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Sierra Leone, which covers the period 1998-2001, outlines the areas of concentration for UNDP support agreed by the Government and UNDP.

2. Preparations for the first CCF included a series of consultations between the Government, UNDP and other development partners, including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom and United Nations specialized agencies, guided by the UNDP advisory note. In the elaboration of the CCF, the impact of the five-year rebel war on the country's economic and social situation and the recommendations of the mid-term review of the fifth country programme were also taken into account.

I. DEVELOPMENT SITUATION FROM A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

3. Current problems and challenges. Sierra Leone faces the following development challenges: ending the war and restoring durable peace; reducing poverty; reducing unemployment and underemployment; strengthening institutional capacity; promoting good governance; and arresting environmental degradation.

4. The existence of widespread poverty remains the main development challenge. The number of people living in poverty has increased because of the war, which has displaced some 2.1 million people. Unemployment and underemployment, already high before the war, are currently estimated to affect 40 per cent of the estimated total labour force. Environmental degradation through deforestation, excessive cultivation and uncontrolled mining have left farm lands infertile and unproductive.

5. Owing to weak institutional capacity and many years of poor governance, the Government has found it difficult to respond effectively to challenges of war and poverty. The over-centralization of development administration, with little participation of civil society, has also been a concern.

6. National development objectives. National development objectives are based on the recognition of the need to address, in a dynamic and integrated manner, the socio-economic decline and inequalities of the past two decades, which have been exacerbated by the ravages of the five-year rebel war. They reflect the need to reconstruct and rebuild the economy and the society on a peaceful, democratic and sustainable base, taking into consideration respect for human rights.

7. Consequently, national development objectives aim at restoring peace and political and social stability; promoting and sustaining broad-based private-sector-led economic growth; investing in people-centred initiatives; reducing poverty and all forms of inequality; enhancing environmental protection and

preservation; ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability; and improving living conditions for the majority of the population.

II. RESULTS AND LESSONS OF PAST COOPERATION

8. The primary goal of the ongoing fifth country programme (1993-1997) is to support the Government in its efforts to address the key areas of the development of human resources and poverty reduction, focusing on: (a) development planning, management and good governance; (b) the development of human resources; and (c) integrated rural development and natural resources management.

9. Assessments of the fifth country programme through the mid-term review, tripartite reviews and evaluations have revealed that as part of its effort to enhance capacity at all levels, UNDP has played a significant role in providing technical assistance, including in the areas of support to peace initiatives and the electoral process, the coordination of humanitarian assistance, and national capacity-building in such key institutions as the Sierra Leone Roads Authority, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank. The reviews identified a number of problem areas, including: (a) delays encountered during the Government's approval process; (b) inadequate coordination of technical assistance with other donors; (c) an inadequate number of counterpart personnel, which slowed down the shift to national execution; and (d) resource limitations; and (e) the prevailing security situation.

10. Lessons learned from the experience gained during the fifth country programme and past Government and donor collaboration indicate that: (a) a well-articulated government vision with clearly stated objectives, combined with strong national ownership and leadership, is instrumental in promoting collaborative efforts among donors in support of sustainable development efforts; (b) technical assistance is effective in building capacity when the Government makes adequate provisions, to ensure the retention of relevant national counterpart personnel through incentives and logistic support, as was done in the case of the Sierra Leone Roads Authority; (c) combining UNDP technical assistance with capital inputs from the United Nations Capital Development Fund or other donors, as was done in the case of the Shenge integrated development project, can help to induce economic activities in a disadvantaged region and can attract additional investments from other donors; (d) strong government coordination eliminates unnecessary competition, duplication and the waste of scarce resource; and (e) active and meaningful participation of NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) as well as civil society in general should be encouraged.

III. PROPOSED STRATEGY AND THEMATIC AREAS

11. Through the consultative process described in the introduction above, the following areas have been identified for UNDP support during the period of the first CCF: (a) peace-building, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction; (b) good governance and economic management; and (c) poverty reduction.

A. Peace-building, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction

12. The UNDP entry point in this area of focus is through the National Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Programme, a framework for the transition from relief to development, whereby critical resettlement and rehabilitation activities will lay the foundation for medium- to long-term development activities.

13. The programme will focus on the restoration of durable peace; the repatriation and resettlement of 2.1 million displaced persons, including 357,000 refugees; the demobilization and reintegration of some 20,000 ex-combatants; the rehabilitation of physical and social infrastructure, particularly in the war-affected areas; and the revival of income-earning opportunities.

14. UNDP interventions in this area, for which $10 million in core resources has been earmarked, will include the following:

(a) Continued support to the peace process, aimed at attaining permanent cessation of hostilities after the signing of a peace accord. The UNDP contribution to this process will be made through the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, which is an overall observer body composed of members from the Government and Revolutionary United Front;

(b) Capacity-building at the national and local levels, targeted as follows:

(i) Strengthening the institutional and operational capacity of the Ministry of National Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (MNRRR) at the national level by addressing the Ministry's requirements for technical staff and providing training in professional development, management techniques, team-building, gender-awareness, group dynamics and related interpersonal skills. UNDP will work closely with other partners, such as the World Bank, the European Union, AfDB, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Department of Development Support and Management Services and the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programme;

(ii) Establishing a conflict-resolution and national reconciliation centre under MNRRR. Activities envisaged for funding include national sensitization campaigns, with an emphasis on forgiveness; local peace and reconciliation initiatives through research, policy advice, and networking within the subregion or with other institutions in Africa and elsewhere; and training of trainers as trauma counsellors and agents of social change;

(iii) Strengthening local NGO/CBO capacity through support to the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations as the main conduit of national coordination of NGO activities. Because grass-roots NGOS and CBOs will face new challenges related to the needs of the disabled and those brutalized by the war, they will require

upgrading of their institutional and technical skills to undertake programmes of therapy, counselling, education and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods. Wherever appropriate, skills will be augmented through the provision of UNVs, who will work in teams with national staff to enhance the transfer of skills. Areas such as organizational structures, methods and procedures and financial management will be addressed;

(c) Promoting preventive development at the grass-roots level: support from UNDP will be used to promote preventive development initiatives at the grass-roots level for which relatively safe areas will be selected as pilot centres. Elements of the approach include conflict resolution and peace-building at the community level; support to traditional groups for the security of their communities; the use of emergency assistance such as food, medicines, etc., together with long-term development support for resettled population; the promotion of community-level productive activities, with a special focus on the private sector; and enhancement of the development capacities of community groups through training in such areas as conflict resolution, human rights and justice.

15. The major focus will be on young people, since they constitute the largest segment of the population. Training will be provided in leadership and the practice of good governance, including participation, accountability and transparency. Leaders and groups will be trained to be advocates of sustainable human development (SHD) themes, including gender-equality, environmental awareness and the development of the skills required to generate livelihoods.

16. With the ultimate goal of putting into place a national capacity for recovery, the impact of UNDP interventions in this area will be measured by: (a) the capacity of the Government, through MNRRR, to develop and coordinate reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in line with what was agreed with donors at the Geneva Round-Table Donors' Conference; (b) the capacity of selected NGOs and CBOs to implement programme activities on a sustainable basis; and (c) the extent to which donor resources can be mobilized and coordinated effectively for agreed programme activities.

B. Good governance and economic management

17. The Government views good governance and sound economic management as the bedrock of the nation's development process. UNDP will collaborate with other donors such as the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom and the World Bank in the following areas, for which $6 million in core resources has been earmarked:

(a) Consolidation of democracy: within the framework of the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa, UNDP has the lead role in the area of governance at the country level; in Sierra Leone, UNDP is in the process of assisting the Government to develop strong coordination capacities in the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and the Public Service, including in public relations. UNDP will also help the Government to develop the professional capacity required to support parliamentary development by enabling Parliament to

scrutinize the performance of public institutions in serving the interests of stakeholders, and empowering civil society to interact more effectively with the State by implementing civic education programmes through the National Commission for Democracy, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the Campaign for Good Governance and other civic education groups. UNDP will also support decentralization and the strengthening of local governments, so that communities will be able to participate more fully in the development process;

(b) Public sector reform: UNDP will support civil service reforms by assisting the Government to reformulate its roles and functions and strengthen law-making and enforcement institutions, including the Legal Department, the Judiciary and the police, through reorganization, the introduction of new management systems, training, the provision of logistical support, and the enhancement of correctional measures for criminal behaviour through the introduction of improvements in prison management;

(c) Transparency and accountability: transparency and accountability will be promoted throughout the public sector. UNDP has already helped the Government to establish the Unit for Monitoring, Accountability and Transparency, which will continue to be supported. In addition, other institutions such as the Accountant General, the Auditor General and the Registrar General will be targeted for support;

(d) Management of the economy: through support to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank, UNDP will assist in strengthening the Government's capacity for policy analysis, formulation and dialogue, long-term planning, resource mobilization, and aid coordination, and sound macroeconomic management.

18. The impact of UNDP assistance will be measured by the extent to which: (a) parliamentarians and good-governance activists adopt new democratic practices; (b) an informed civil society finds itself in a position to exert its influence on the functions of the Government; (c) attitudes towards corruption change and corrupt practices in the running of public affairs are reduced; (d) sound economic policies induce higher levels of growth in the economy; and (e) better planning and coordination improve the utilization of and effectiveness of aid.

C. Poverty reduction

19. The Government is in the process of finalizing a National Action Plan for Poverty Reduction, with the support of UNDP, the World Bank, AfDB, the United Nations Population Fund and the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom. The plan will focus on creating an understanding of the nature, spread and gender dimensions of national poverty and promoting economic growth and improving family welfare and living conditions.

20. In supporting the Government's efforts to achieve the above objectives, UNDP will use poverty reduction as the entry point to SHD. The focus will be on creating sustainable livelihoods and promoting gender-equality and the

regeneration and protection of the environment. A total $4 million in core resources has been earmarked for poverty eradication activities.

21. At the national level, UNDP will support the development of the capacity to formulate policies and action plans for the eradication of poverty. At the operational level, government institutions such as the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, MNRRR, the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs and grass-roots organizations will be strengthened, so that they have adequate capacity to develop and manage poverty reduction programmes with SHD dimensions. In particular, the following areas will be targeted:

(a) Development of SHD-sensitive data and information on poverty to generate a policy dialogue within government policy-making institutions as well as with civil organizations, in order to understand poverty in all its dimensions;

(b) Promoting the creation of sustainable livelihoods by strengthening rural financial institutions such as rural banks, cooperatives and farmers' associations in order to improve access to credit and other technical support services; providing support for special financial intermediaries to ensure access to credit by women, and the rural and urban poor; promoting community participation by supporting local initiatives, including micro-projects, through training and skills development;

(c) Promotion of gender-equality by supporting the advancement of women in accordance with the Platform of Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women as well as facilitating gender-mainstreaming by providing support for training in gender analysis for key government officials, parliamentarians and civil society;

(d) Building the capacity of NGOs and other community organizations as front-line operators in the proper use and management of natural resources.

22. Impact will be measured by the actual programmes under implementation aimed at improving income and expanding sustainable livelihood opportunities for a majority of people trapped in poverty, with the aim of drastically reducing the number of people (currently some 80 per cent) living below the poverty line by the end of the CCF period. It is envisaged that the level of awareness of issues of gender-equality and environmental concerns will be raised substantially because of the high priority and profile accorded these themes in all programmes.

IV. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

23. Management of the CCF. To enhance national ownership and control, whenever possible, national execution will be the preferred execution modality. Prior to the implementation of nationally executed programmes, an assessment of national capacity in terms of administrative, technical, logistical and support services will be carried out, in order to ensure that appropriate activities are undertaken to strengthen these areas within each programme, as necessary.

24. The use of national experts will continue to be promoted. UNVs will be sought for work in areas where national experts are not available. The Government will also explore the use of national UNVs in the implementation of community-based programmes.

25. It should be noted that the emphasis on national execution will not preclude the use of external expertise. The Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals and technical cooperation among developing countries mechanisms will also be used, with a view to promoting reliance on national, regional and developing-country experience.

26. In view of their comparative advantage in working at the grass-roots level, partnerships with NGOs and CBOs for the implementation of UNDP-supported activities will be pursued.

27. United Nations system coordination. Enhanced United Nations system coordination will be critical in the implementation of the first CCF. The agencies of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy have agreed to synchronize their respective programming cycles from 1998, within the framework of the country strategy note currently under preparation. This will facilitate joint reviews and assessments of United Nations support and enhance government capacity to coordinate the activities of United Nations agencies.

28. Linkages to regional and subregional programmes. Recognition of cooperation agreements with member States of the Mano River Union, the Organization of African Unity, the Economic Community of West African States and other organizations will be emphasized. This will encourage subregional and regional joint ventures and help to promote cooperation in areas such as private sector development, trade and peace-building with other member countries.

29. Monitoring and review. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development will be provided with support to take the lead coordinating role in the monitoring and review of the first CCF. In addition to annual reviews, the Government and UNDP will undertake an in-depth evaluation of the CCF in the third year of implementation. Selected NGOs and donors will also be invited to participate.

30. Resource mobilization. During the mid-term review, it was agreed that a more structured and systematic resource mobilization strategy should be employed for future cooperation. The Government intends to utilize UNDP resources strategically to attract other resources by: (a) complementing Consultative Group meetings with a manageable number of sectoral round tables, particularly in the areas of reconciliation, rehabilitation, governance, economic management and poverty reduction; (b) accelerating the application of the programme approach, using UNDP resources as a catalyst for parallel financing from other donors; (c) increasing efforts towards government and third-party cost-sharing; and (d) raising resources for the CCF by broadening the open trust fund arrangement started under the pilot demobilization programme with the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TARGET TABLE FOR SIERRA LEONE (1998-2002)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Source	Amount	Comments
UNDP CORE FUNDS		
Estimated IPF carry-over	-	
TRAC 1.1.1	18 000	Assigned immediately to country.
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
TRAC 1.1.3	3 000	
SPPD/STS	1 590	
Subtotal	22 590[a]	
NON-CORE FUNDS		
Government cost-sharing	500	
Sustainable development funds	1 000	
	of which:	
GEF	680	
Montreal Protocol	320	
Third-party cost-sharing	1 000	
Funds, trust funds and other	9 000	
	of which:	
Open Trust Fund for Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts	3 000	
UNCDF	6 000	
Subtotal	11 500[a]	
GRAND TOTAL	34 090[a]	

[a] Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.

Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environment Facility; IPF = indicative planning figure; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core; and UNCDF = United Nations Capital Development Fund.